



The Prison Door Is Open —

What Are You Still Doing Inside?

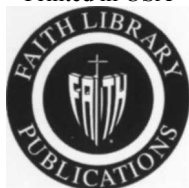
Kenneth Hagin Jr.

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"The Prison Door Is Open—What Are You Still Doing Inside?"

Kenneth Hagin Jr.

Contents

1	<u>No Carbon Copies</u>	5
2	<u>Good News for Prisoners</u>	11
3	<u>The Prison Door is Open</u>	15
4	<u>Healing's in the Now</u>	25
	<u>A Sinner's Prayer To Receive Jesus As Savior</u>	33

Chapter 1

No Carbon Copies

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn.

—Isaiah 61:1,2

I grew up in church. I have been in it all my life. In fact, I was born one Sunday morning and was in church the next Sunday morning—and I've been there ever since.

But I had to accept Jesus Christ as my personal Savior just like anybody else does. It doesn't make any difference who your father and mother were, or how spiritual or unspiritual they

were. Your relationship with God depends on you and God and nobody else. God has no grandchildren. He has no great-grandchildren. All He has are children.

I've been on a church platform since I was 2 years old. My parents had no choice, because in those days, there were no nurseries in churches. My sister is 18 months younger than me. Daddy took me up on the platform with him so Mother could take care of my sister out in the congregation.

I had no desire to be in the ministry. If I had had my own way, I would have been pleased if God had let me be a businessman and work in the ministry of helps. But when God reaches down and knocks on your heart's door and begins to deal with you, you have no recourse, because the gifts and calling of God are without repentance (Rom. 11:29). When He calls, you have to answer.

When I minister, I minister through the Spirit of God, not through great oratory, intellect, or theology.

Thank God for intellect. I believe everybody should get as much education as possible and be as

smart as he or she can be. Thank God for the study of God and the things of God that people term theology; I like to delve into it. Thank God for oratorical skills. Thank God you can study and expand your mind and learn to speak well. But all of that is as nothing without the Spirit of God.

As I often tell our students at RHEMA Bible Training Center in Tulsa, when you take all of the natural abilities you have and put them together with the Spirit of God, the natural and the supernatural coming together become an explosive force for God!

We've got a problem in charismatic circles today. Everybody's trying to copy somebody else. The only Person I want to copy is Jesus Christ.

Of course, you can't study these people without picking up some of their phraseology, etc., but there's no use in trying to copy them. You couldn't be them if you wanted to. You've got your own personality and they've got theirs.

I can't be Kenneth Hagin Sr. He's got his ministry that God gave him. I've got my ministry that God gave me. I'm not my father, and I don't try to be him; I'm me.

When God dealt with me about the ministry, He didn't tap me on the shoulder and say, "Ken, I've called you to be another Kenneth Hagin." No, He tapped me on the shoulder and said, "I've called you to minister the Word of God with the anointing that I have given unto you."

God has set many, many different types of ministry gifts in the Church. Some preach, and some teach. Teaching is slow and methodical: line upon line and precept upon precept. Preaching contains excitement; it is an intensified approach that excites people to accept what the preacher tells them God has said. Sometimes a minister uses all elements together—a mixture of teaching and preaching, as I do.

Too many ministers, however, try to copy somebody who has been successful. If there is any minister whom I would copy, it would surely be my father, since he is probably the greatest of them all, as far as I'm concerned. (I may be a little prejudiced, you understand!)

Each one of us has been called to some ministry—it may not be a pulpit ministry—but every child of God is called to some ministry. It may be the ministry of prayer, the ministry of

helps, or something else.

Chapter 2

Good News for Prisoners

Our text says: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. . . "

Moffatt's translation puts it this way: "... to tell prisoners they are free, to tell captives they are released."

"The opening of the prison" is God's figurative way of describing that you have been released from the bondage of Satan: from sin, sickness, disease, torment—all that is involved with the prison house of Satan himself.

The prison door has been opened by the redemptive act of Jesus Christ. All kinds of human needs were met by that act.

In this message I will deal specifically with the physical needs, but spiritual and other needs

also are involved in the redemptive act of Jesus Christ. Whatever you need is involved in that act! Furthermore, the same steps—the same principles—work for all human needs.

Go back to Genesis, the book of beginnings, the first book of the Pentateuch, and you'll find that God made man for just one purpose: to commune with Him. Mankind never was meant to be in the devil's prison house. Man was made to walk and talk with God.

God had created spiritual beings, but they were not sufficient for Him to fellowship with. Among these spiritual beings, He had created archangels. In Isaiah 14, you'll find that the name of one was "Lucifer, son of the morning" (v. 12). He probably was the chief archangel, having charge of all the angels.

Lucifer decided he was going to outrank God. He said, "I'm going to ascend my throne above God's throne." (Lucifer already sat on a throne as ruler of the angels.) One-third of the angelic host decided to enter into his conspiracy to overthrow God, but God put a stop to it and kicked Lucifer out of heaven. That's where the devil or Satan had his origin. You can find this story in Ezekiel 28.

The two archangels who did not fall, according to the Word of God, are Gabriel and Michael.

One day God decided, "I want beings who will worship Me and walk with Me because they choose to." He created man and made him a free moral agent. He gave man the power of choice. God wants man to serve Him, but He's not rubber-stamping us to serve Him. It's our choice.

God walked and talked with man. They communed together, and God showed him all the beauty of His creation.

But the enemy, Satan, arose once again, saying, "I couldn't get my throne above God's, but I'm going to steal God's greatest creation. I'm going to steal His man!"

Satan entered the Garden of Eden and caused the fall of the human race. And through the fall of man there came sin, disease, torment, and all the other evils that plague this planet.

Thank God our Heavenly Father said, "I shall now make a way of escape for my man, this being to whom I have given the freedom of choice. He can choose either good or evil; it will be up to

him."

GALATIANS 3:13,14

13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Jesus Christ came! He redeemed fallen man. That's when the prison house was opened—that's when the prison door was opened—when Jesus died on that cross, suspended between heaven and earth.

I like to look at it as a type of bridge between heaven and earth—a bridge you cross when you choose to walk away from the beggarly elements of this world and into the spiritual heights of God Himself.

Chapter 3

The Prison Door is Open

Even though the prison house is open—even though the prison door is open—the devil has been successful at keeping countless people inside. Many of these have even found that they are free spiritually: They have received Christ; they have received salvation. They have received the spiritual benefits of the redemptive plan of God.

But the devil has kept them hoodwinked regarding the physical inheritance that is theirs in this world. He has said to them, "Oh, yes, that's all part of it, but you can only have the power of God, healing, and all the other good things in the sweet by-and-by. One of these days—when it's all over—then they can be yours."

Why did Jesus open the prison for us? According to Moffatt's translation, it was to tell the prisoners they are free, and to tell the captives they are released.

How did Jesus open the prison for us? By bearing the punishment for our sins.

ISAIAH 53:5,6

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Dr. Young's translation of this last verse is, "Jehovah has caused to mete on Him the punishment of us all."

In Deuteronomy 28, all sickness is listed among the punishments God tells us in Galatians 3:13 that we have been redeemed from.

In Rotherham's translation of Isaiah 53:10 we read, "He laid on him sickness." Matthew 8:17 says, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."

Jesus paid our debt. And because He paid our debt, we do not have to pay it.

Oh, thank God, once the verdict was reached that man has sinned and come short of the glory of

God, requiring a great redemption, Jesus stepped up and said, "I'll endure the pain of the cross. I'll endure the stripes upon my back. I'll endure the crown of thorns upon my head. I'll endure the ignominious death of sin and disease so that our man whom We made can be free."

And you and I no longer have to suffer—because Jesus Christ suffered for us!

How, then, are we to get out of this prison? The first and most important thing is to know that the door is open! If you're locked in a room or think you're locked in the room and don't check the door, you could sit there for hours and hours wishing you were out. Just because you heard a "click," you accepted what you heard instead of walking over to the door and checking it out for yourself.

Faith must have divine fact to rest upon. Faith must know what the Word says before it can act.

What did Jesus say in Luke 4:18? "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach" As we saw, Moffatt's translation of the counterpart of our text reads, "... the Eternal has ... sent me with good news for

wretched men . . . to tell prisoners they are free, to tell captives they are released."

Jesus came and said, "I have opened the prison doors. You don't have to be bound anymore." I remember His using that same word "bound" once when a crippled woman came into the synagogue. He said, "Ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, WHOM SATAN HATH BOUND . . . be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" (Luke 13:16).

Satan has bound mankind in sickness and bondage, but Jesus redeemed us and set us free.

All sickness is called "oppression." For example, Acts 10:38 tells us, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."

Faith must be in your mouth and your heart before you get out of prison. Romans 10:8 says that the word of faith "is nigh thee, even in thy MOUTH, and in thy HEART...."

What is Paul talking about? He's talking about the fact that he speaks with his mouth the thing he

believes in his heart.

With wrong thinking, you'll remain in the prison house, even knowing that the prison door is open.

You've got to have right thinking in order to create right believing to create action that will release you from the prison.

The first thing God requires is that man forsake his own ways and accept God's ways. That's the hardest thing for man to do, because man is conditioned to touch, to feel, to taste, to hear, and to see—and these five senses are all in the physical realm.

Have you realized that you don't touch God or move with God by any of the physical senses?

I know some of you will reply, "Yes, but I experienced feeling."

You experienced feeling after the fact, not before. You experienced feeling after you believed God and moved out in faith toward Him. Then you experienced the feeling. You didn't have the feeling first.

Most people want the feeling, the faith, and

then the fact, but that's the opposite of the way it happens. You've got to have the fact first; then faith in the fact; and then the feeling will come. (And whether you know it or not, that is a profound statement.)

Faith requires evidence. Evidence of feeling or touch? No, evidence of the Word.

You see, since the fall of man, we have been looking at the symptoms instead of what God says. We see sickness, because it's ever-present in this world. If you've got a pain, you can feel it. If you've got a twisted leg, you can see it. It's there. It's evident. And we are held in the prison house by the symptoms rather than being released by the Word.

Many people who are sitting in the devil's prison know the Word. They'll even tell you, "Yes, I know God's Word says this, that, and the other." They may make many confessions of faith, but they're still in the devil's prison. Why? Because they don't take any corresponding actions.

To get out of a prison, you've got to get up and move!

When you accepted Jesus Christ as your

personal Savior, did you get saved just by sitting and doing nothing, or did you make a move toward God?

No doubt you heard somebody talking, preaching, or singing the Word. The Word pierced your heart and caused faith to rise in your heart. You said, "I know what I'll do. I'll go to Jesus. There's my answer."

Perhaps you didn't stand up literally, but spiritually you went toward God. You began to pray.

Many people want to get out of the devil's prison, but they want somebody else to do it for them. Many people come in a prayer line expecting me to have faith for their healing. All I can do is to have faith that the power of God will be ministered to them. That's my point of contact. That's my part of the bargain.

Their part is to believe that the power of God has gone into them and to walk away free by the power of God.

I won't stop praying for those who don't have any faith, however. Maybe one of these days they will see what it's all about.

A warden can visit a prisoner sitting in a cell and say to him, "Here is your pardon," but he can't make that prisoner leave the cell if the man doesn't want to walk out on his own accord. The prisoner has to do something to get out: He must get up and start walking toward freedom.

The pardon can be signed, the warden can give it to him, but that prisoner can sit in his cell without moving, even though the door is wide open. Every guard there may know that he can walk out the front gate a free man any time he wishes.

He could even walk out of his cell, walk out into the yard, look up into the sky and say, "Boy, I sure would like to get on the other side of that wall. I sure would like to be out there with the rest of the people." Yet he was entitled to walk through the front gate any time he was ready. His name was on a list at the front gate that said, "This man is free. He may leave."

But until that prisoner gets over there and walks out the front gate, he's going to stay in that prison. It's up to him. It's not up to the warden. It's not up to the judicial system, because the judicial system already has spoken. The governor already

has signed the pardon. It's been stamped and sealed and handed to the prisoner. Now the ball's in his court. What he does now is up to him.

Chapter 4

Healing's in the Now

Jesus Christ came into our world. He tore the prison door asunder, turned around, and handed us the Word of God. He says to us today, "The door's open! All you have to do is walk out! By my stripes ye are healed—ye were healed!"

This healing He bought for us can happen in the now; you needn't put it off into the distant future. I talk and minister to so many people who say, "Oh, Brother Hagin, the Word says I'm healed, and one of these days I'm going to be well. One of these days I'm going to get it!"

As long as you keep your healing in the future, it will stay in the future!

Many people say, "Oh, God healed me 2,000 years ago." But the next time you see them, they're still sick.

Others say, "God provided for my needs a long time ago." And the next time you see them, they still don't have two cents to rub together.

What has happened in the past, and what is going to happen in the future is not going to do you any good in the now. Knowing that the prison door was opened in the past, and postponing your getting out of prison in the future is not going to help your present situation.

I'm really not much interested in the past except to know what happened. I'm really not much concerned about the future, either (which upsets some people). God says as long as I live and walk with Him, and commune with Him, He'll take care of the future. When Jesus comes again, I'll go up with Him. He's got all of the future taken care of, and I'll be with Him forever.

What I'm really concerned about is the here and now, because this is when I'm alive. This is when I have needs—right now. I didn't need anything in the year 1933; I wasn't even born then. I don't know what I'm going to need in the future. All I know is that as long as I walk with God, the future is taken care of, so I'm really not concerned about it. I am concerned about my life and my problems right now.

I am concerned about being in the prison the enemy has built for God's people. We're all God's

people. God created us all. He didn't create one of us for the devil. In the beginning He created mankind to enjoy fellowship with Him, and the enemy has stolen men away. But Jesus came to set us free and take us out of bondage.

This holy Word of God was made real by the blood of the Son of God as it poured from the palms of His hands, His feet, His brow, His back, and the wound in His side; and that blood flowed down the cross and dripped on the ground around Golgotha's Hill. **MANKIND WAS LEGALLY FREE AT LAST!**

The enemy knows he has to release mankind. He knows he can't hold onto them. But he does everything he can to berate and intimidate mankind. He does everything he can to hold them in prison. But he can't hold mankind any longer, because the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ has opened the prison door and set men free.

Because Americans as far back as the Revolutionary War have been willing to shed their blood for freedom, you and I walk free today; we meet freely today; we have the freedom to express our opinions; and we have freedom to believe and worship God as we please.

You don't have to live in the devil's prison anymore! You don't have to be locked in the chains of sickness—of spiritual depravity. You can be released, because Jesus Christ paid the penalty for you! He set you free! The prison door is open!

All you've got to do is accept it and walk out to freedom. Jesus Christ signed your pardon—and it was signed by His blood. It was signed by the stripes on His back. It was signed, sealed, and delivered.

He gives it to you, saying, "By my stripes you are healed." He says, "I give it to you. It's yours! Freedom!" Freedom is yours because of who Jesus is.

Hallelujah to Jesus! Jesus is real! The power of God is real! The prison house is open!

JOHN 3:16

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Prophecy

The prison is open. It has been

opened for you. You no longer have to remain inside.

As you feel those bands that would press themselves around you, realize that they are only made to seem like they are real.

I have caused them to fall aside.

If you will follow my Spirit and just walk with me, you can shake yourself as Samson did of old and watch these chains and bondages fall away; and you can go skipping and jumping and rejoicing, saying, "How glad and how joyful I am that Jesus has set me free."



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A Sinner's Prayer To Receive Jesus As Savior

Dear Heavenly Father ...

I come to you in the name of Jesus.

Your Word says, "*... him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out*" (John 6:37), So I know you won't cast me out, but you take me in, And I thank you for it.

You said in your Word, "*Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*" (Rom. 10:13).

I am calling on your name, So I know you have saved me now.

You also said, "*if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*" (Romans 10:9-10).

I believe in my heart Jesus Christ is the Son of God. I believe that He was raised from the dead for my justification.

And I confess Him now as my Lord, Because your Word says, "*... with the heart man believeth unto righteousness ...*" and I do believe with my heart, I have now become the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Cor. 5:21)... And I am saved! Thank you, Lord!

Signed _____

Date _____

About the Author

Rev. Kenneth Hagin Jr., Executive Vice-President of Kenneth Hagin Ministries and pastor of RHEMA Bible Church, teaches from a rich and diversified background of more than 45 years in the ministry.

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Rev. Hagin Jr. is the International Director of RHEMA Ministerial Association International. He can be heard weekdays on "Faith Seminar of the Air," broadcast on stations throughout the United States. And his television program, "RHEMA Praise," can be seen on every continent.



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